

PRESS RELEASE

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

Fourteenth District, Michigan
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 11, 2002

CONTACT:
Dena Graziano (202)226-6888

CONYERS AND 30 MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE SUE BUSH FOR ENDING NUCLEAR TREATY

Congressman John Conyers, Jr., issued the following statement regarding President Bush's revocation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty:

"Once again the president has told us that the Constitution can be trumped by his political maneuvers when it is in his political interest to do so. Ignoring the powers the Constitution vests in the different branches of Government, President Bush has decided to unilaterally terminate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty between the United States and the former Soviet Union.

The Constitution clearly empowers Congress, not the President, to establish the laws of the land. Article I, Section I clearly states that 'All legislative Powers...shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.'

Treaties, like other federal laws made in accordance with the Constitution, are the 'supreme Law of the Land' under Article II, Clause 2. The President is charged with carrying out these laws. Nowhere does the Constitution give the President power to repeal laws. Only Congress has the authority to undo its legislative work. Yet this is exactly what the President has done: he has unilaterally repealed a treaty - that was Constitutionally enacted with the ratification of the Senate and the signature of the President. The Framers clearly intended that the making, modifying and termination of treaties be the joint prerogative of the legislative and executive branches - and in practice treaties have historically been revoked or terminated with Congressional consent.

President Bush has tried to obliterate our carefully crafted system of checks and balances. He is not only executing the laws, as the Constitution requires him to do, but he is also eliminating the need for a legislature all together because he is now making and repealing the laws of the land - a role reserved for Congress.

Now is a time that we must stand up to the President, protect the Constitution and assert the Constitutional mandate that Congress conduct its legislative authority to approve and revoke treaties."